



Resolution SS1112-24

February, 29, 2012

COMMITTEE ON RESIDENCE LIFE
MAYA YOUNES, MECHA DIVERSITY COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE
JOHN SANDERS, RESIDENCE LIFE COMMITTEE CHAIR

**A RESOLUTION PROPOSING INCREASED ATTENTION AND REVISION TO THE
UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME'S DISCRIMINATORY HARASSMENT POLICY**

Whereas, The University of Notre Dame states that "conduct...constitutes discriminatory harassment, if it is accompanied by intentionally demeaning expressions concerning the race, gender, religion, age, veteran status, sexual orientation, national origin, or disability of the victim(s)";

Whereas, The University of Notre Dame Discriminatory Harassment policy "believes in the intrinsic value of all human beings and is committed to a full, peaceable participation of all its members in the educational endeavor it fosters";

Whereas, The University of Notre Dame mission statement states that "the intellectual interchange essential to a university requires, and is enriched by, the presence and voices of diverse scholars and students;

Whereas, The Office of Institutional Equity provides, "a mechanism for addressing complaints of harassment and discrimination";

Whereas, this mechanism currently consists of any incident of discriminatory harassment by a student towards any other student inside a residence facility, will be issued to Residence Hall Rectors who shall consult with the Office of Residence Life to determine whether the complaint shall be handled at the Rector's discretion or referred to the Office of Residence Life, with cases not occurring in Residence halls being addressed by the Office of Residence Life; notwithstanding the reporting procedure outlined above, "a person alleging discriminatory harassment may choose to report the incident to the Office of Institutional Equity or the Ombudsperson for Discriminatory Harassment";

Whereas, the survey results of the Race Relations in Housing Workshop of November 9, 2011, reveal that only one out of twenty five students present at the workshop were aware of the procedure for reporting racial discrimination cases with only four out of twenty five students being aware of the existence of a Discriminatory Harassment Ombudsperson on campus;

Whereas, the results of the Race Relations in Housing Workshop of November 9, 2011 demonstrates that students do not feel that if they were a victim of racially motivated discrimination, the University would take concrete steps to investigate what happened;

Whereas, only one case of discriminatory harassment was reported to the Office of Residence Life in the fall of 2011 while the results of the Race Relations in Housing Workshop survey reveal that at least six cases have been unreported;

Whereas, the current discriminatory harassment policy, because of its limited exposure and understanding by the student body leads to a large amount of discriminatory behavior going unreported; and

Whereas, The possibility of discrimination creates a culture of fear in students, faculty, and staff-a fear that discourages some from entering the Notre Dame family, a fear that promotes some to leave the community, and a fear that inhibits the ability of some to live fully as created in the image of God; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the University of Notre Dame demonstrate that discriminatory harassment is unacceptable by more widely advertizing and exposing students to the avenues of reporting and addressing instances of discrimination both in and out of Residence Halls;

Resolved, That the University of Notre Dame re-evaluate its training of Residence Hall staff on ways to create a welcoming community for all of its members regardless of race or ethnicity, and knowledge of the policy against discriminatory harassment;

Resolved, That the University of Notre Dame revise its reporting procedure on discriminatory harassment that occurs in residence facilities to include but not be limited to the enumeration of the responsibilities of the Residence Hall Staff in regards to reporting/responding to instances of discriminatory harassment, in order to guarantee the appropriate action is taken; and

Resolved, That special programming be established in residence halls for the education of hall residents on reporting and understanding what constitutes discriminatory harassment to increase its accessibility to students and thereby prevent unreported or underreported cases of discrimination from occurring, reflecting a commitment to the creation of an inclusive community, respectful of individual dignity.